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Eritrea

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Introduction

1. The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) presents the 3rd Cycle UPR National Report (2014–2018) that focuses on the implementation of the 92 accepted 2nd Cycle UPR Recommendation and beyond. It is spearheaded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in coordination with relevant ministries, institutions, national civic organizations and coordinated by a UPR National Coordinating Body (NCB).

Methodology

2. The 92 accepted recommendations are organized under 6 functional categories (development and social equality, social sector and dignified life, administration of justice, liberties and engagement and international cooperation). These cover 18 policy and strategy areas with focus made on the legal and institutional basis, awareness raising, monitoring and progress. It also underlines the effort done at mainstreaming human rights in nation building, reflects political, economic, social and cultural areas in human and people's rights predicated in Eritrea's context, needs and human betterment ideals. An Annex Table is also attached to give detail breakdown.

3. In accordance to the UPR reporting guideline, the Report covers progress on full implementation and partial implementation. 80 recommendations (85.87%) are fully implemented, and 12 recommendations (14.13%) are partially implemented.

4. The Report is a result of the bi-annual meetings and reports, continuous formative evaluations, a Mid Term UPR Review and Report and the final assessment based on reports submitted by each stakeholder. A compiled draft was circulated to all members of the NCB at the beginning of September 2018 and NCB members submitted written comments and three NCB meetings held to update the draft. The feedbacks were taken into consideration and a summary of the updated report was submitted to the 25 September meeting of National Civic Organizations. A consultation meeting with Embassies and the UN agencies accredited to Eritrea took place on 15 October 2018.

I. Implementation of accepted recommendations

Legal and political basis

5. Eritrea emanated from the national liberation struggle for social justice and human rights. Nation building is thus grounded on equal rights and opportunities and is sanctioned by national law. Accordingly, there is no discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preference made on the basis of ethnicity, religion, social status, language, opinion, and gender. Equity considerations and the equitable distribution of wealth and resources are ascertained. The population is active participant and beneficiary of the wealth and opportunities on the basis of an equal footing of all rights and a system that nurtures collective responsibility is promoted. An essential tenet and best practice inherent in the system are the community-based interventions and structures at grassroots level and were critical in the implementation and success of the recommendations.

6. The promising post-independence rapid socio-economic, political and social transformation was disrupted by the Eritrea-Ethiopia border war (1998–2000) and the existential external threats thereafter. Hence, the political trajectory and dynamics were kept on hold as priorities changed and the country had to grapple, first and foremost, with the existential external threats of preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Nevertheless, Eritrea is governed by the rule of law. The Transitional Codes complemented by the 178 proclamations and 125 legal notices are the source of law and enforced. The judiciary, composed of hierarchical courts and Public Prosecution, upholds the administration of justice. Functional tasks and responsibilities on policy, monitoring, training and human resources is promoted and regulated by line ministries. Moreover, Regional administrations (six regions) shoulder governance responsibilities and

organization of implementation. The elected regional and local assemblies *(established by Proclamation 86/1996)* also serve as basis to guaranteeing rights and responsibilities in public affairs. In particular, local governance (in 2,862 villages, 751 localities) serves as the base of Governance and the new round of local election is taking place presently. In general, the PFDJ (Peoples Front for Democracy and Justice) National Charter, as a political road map, drives the vision of nation building and development.

7. The Peace and Cooperation Declaration between Eritrea and Ethiopia signed on July 2018 has ushered new dynamics of peace, security and development in the Horn of Africa. The declaration of war on Eritrea is now rescinded, asserting the unconditional implementation of the final and binding ruling of the International Boundary Commission and the respect of Eritrea's sovereignty. This new development has led to opening the borders and free movements of people, goods and services. Eritrea and Somalia also signed a Peace and Cooperation Agreement in August 2018, that led to the Eritrea-Ethiopia-Somalia Tri-Partite Peace and Cooperation Declaration. Similarly, President Isaias and President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti met in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) and agreed to establish a new chapter of cooperation and good neighbourhood between the two countries.

A. Development, social equality and efforts in Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCRs)

1. Macro-economic tenets and ESCRs

(a) ESCRs and the post-border war development campaign

8. The progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights is based on the principles of social justice. The Warsay Yikealo Development Campaign of 2003-2014 is the post-border war development drive. The National Indicative Development (NIDP2014-2018) consolidated the dynamics and progress of the campaign.

9. Driven by prudent macro policies and programmes, all-inclusive, people-cantered, diversified and sustainable strategies are progressively implemented.

10. In the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, programs such as, Integrated Rural Development Scheme, the Coastal Development Programme and Integrated Social Sector Strategy have been employed.

11. Implementation of Land Proclamation No 58/1994 is strengthened and campaigns intensified. The right of citizens (18 years and above) to access agricultural, residential, and investment plots is implemented, and gender equity considered. The elected people's land committees play decisive roles in the identification of potential, screening of applicants and decision making; and one of 3 members of committees at all levels is a female.

(b) Model initiatives in poverty elimination

12. Poverty elimination in general and malnutrition of under-five year children in particular are top priorities of the Government. Food Security is anchored mainly on the improvement of agricultural productivity through the structural transformation of agriculture, including the use of modern irrigation. Poverty elimination are on-going and the following are some examples:

- Government sponsored Model Agricultural Transformations have evolved to augment the drive in agricultural transformation, poverty elimination and income generation of households and vulnerable groups. Accordingly, many have been resettled voluntarily in the schemes near the new Kerkebet, Gerset and Logo dams.
- Minimum Integrated Household Agricultural Package (MIHAP) is another factor to household food self-sufficiency in terms of nutrition and income. Citizens, including women headed households and small-scale farmers benefited from this intensive, integrated agriculture in a small land size (quarter hectare), rain-water harvested in the form of check dams or micro-dams and used judiciously.

- Transforming the life of isolated settlements and villages in pastoralist, semi-pastoral communities as well as small scattered settlements (in Anseba, Gash Barka, Northern Red Sea and Southern Red Sea regions) were resettled. This promoted improved livelihood, agriculture, livestock development and social services.
- Saving and Micro-Credit programme (SMCP) is expanded to promote economic opportunities for the poor. SMCP promotes loan provision, Solidarity Groups (SGs) and individual loans through 538 Village Banks (VBs). VBs lend short-term progressive loans up to 8 cycles. SMCP has 69,000 beneficiaries (66% women) and assessments show that their repayment rate high and repay their loans on time.
- Eritrean Women Agribusiness Association is a pilot scheme to promote agri-business with four groups involved in mushrooms, rabbit production, food and Aloe Vera processing. Members individually are involved in milk processing, poultry, apiculture and floriculture.

(c) Adequate standard of life

13. Significant effort to improve the standards of living is promoted in the areas of housing, utilities, transportation and communications. Land for housing is distributed and houses built. Accessibility to electricity increased to 43.5% (urban 81% and rural 22.6%) in 2015. Road transport has expanded by 62% and 85% of the villages are covered. Clean, tap water access has shown remarkable progress with 85% rural coverage and 92% in urban areas. In communication technology, GSM mobile subscribers in 2016 reached 501,865 and there is 80% coverage in land line and fixed wireless technology.

(d) New civil service remuneration system

14. In line to the modest growth of the economy and the on-going efforts to create macro-economic stability, a new remuneration system that introduces substantial increase of civil service salary has been introduced in 2017. The effort is managed as a process and requires time to finalize but a gradual integration of national service members into this system is being implemented as a priority.

(e) Critical areas in cultural life

15. Eritrea came in the heels of the protracted liberation war that claimed a heavy sacrifice for human rights and basic values. This laid the foundation of a national culture upon which the Eritrean State is established. It asserts national unity and citizenship, progress, peace and stability and viable future. The transfer of these values as cultural heritage to the new generation through an integrated system of upbringing is consolidated as an important element of nation building. In this context, cultural diversity is guaranteed by national law and cultural rights.

16. In this vein, the set of cultural institutions are strengthened and community-based approaches on cultural life are mainstreamed in all State policies and programmes. The promotion of languages, literary work, music, dance and dramas reflect the values of unity, sacrifice, commitment and hard work are advanced by the regional and local level cultural committees including folklore cultural groups functioning at community level and by various interest groups.

17. The production and publications of books, films, dramas and visual art is evolving and the youth is the main drive. The civil and criminal code of Eritrea offers protection of such work. Eritrea Hidri Publishers (HP) promotes publication of books in all Eritrean languages. Effort is being made to protect and safeguard tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Proclamation No 177/2015) and after concerted effort the capital city Asmara is now a UNESCO recognized world heritage site.

18. Eritrean cultural festivals continue yearly at national and regional levels and in the Eritrean Diaspora. Festivals epitomize national unity and citizenship, the rich diversity treasured in the culture of the nine ethnic groups of the society and the viable future of the nation.

19. Enabling environment is consolidated for citizens to work and manifest their creativity and innovation in science and technology.

The Eritrean Science and Technology Development Agency *(Proclamation No 122/2002)* is promoting and coordinating the application of science and technology in development and building capability on research and innovation. Professionals and sstudents in the higher learning institutions in particular present their innovations with outstanding and promising results (as individuals or as a research group). Children and youth in the school system also develop innovations which are displayed and rewarded during festivals.

2. Development and welfare of children

(a) Children's welfare system

20. Functional Efforts and programmes promote child rights and stronger upbringing and care. Martyrs' children, orphans and vulnerable groups are given focus. The understanding and enforcement of women and child rights and elimination of FGM/C, underage marriage and other harmful traditional practices is strengthened and are highlighted in the following measures:

- Finalization of the National Child Policy Document.
- Development of inter-sectoral coordination at all levels involving MoH, MoLHW and NUEW; and annual regional and sub-regional level assessments conducted and action plans developed and implemented accordingly.
- Pilot FGM/C mapping at household levels conducted (2017) in Adi-Tekeliezan sub region; A survey to analyze the driving factors of underage marriage also conducted in 2015/16 (in 26 villages of 3 regions). A National Strategic Action Plan was developed as a result and Asmath, Habero and Adi-Tekeliezan sub regions subsequently declared to ban FGM/C and underage marriage.

21. Furthermore, community-based popular structures (Children's Wellbeing Committees - CWCs, FGM/C and Early Marriage Committees, Care Givers, etc.) empower communities and families.

22. Training and campaigns conducted on child rights protection, policy, justice, as well as social transformation including FGM/C and early marriage conducted to 1506 MLHW regional and sub-regional staff and social workers, judges, prosecutors, police officers, officers of detention centres, administrators, community level structures, activists and community dialogue facilitators and has contributed in building capacity. Campaigns and seminars by various actors, at all levels with 1,692,045 participants strengthened the extended mobilization of communities and raised understanding. The workshop on early marriage in Asmara (June 2016) in collaboration with the AU Commission and similar events contributed in the mobilization.

(b) Combating child labour and trafficking in persons especially women and children

23. Child labour monitoring is done by the Labour Inspection Service (in accordance Article 143-1 of Labour Proclamation) in collaboration with local administrations and Police are empowered to identify and bring offenders to justice. Transitional Penal Code also ensures that no person shall be held in slavery or servitude nor shall any person be required to perform forced labour. Article 607 states that whosoever makes arrangements or provisions of any kind for the trafficking of women, infants and young persons, is punishable by Law.

24. Promotion of 8 year compulsory basic education policy that is gradually made available is promoted and is enforced by the Labor Proclamation as an effective means of combating child labor. The Department of Labor conducts public sensitization against child labor and vulnerable children received Government financial assistance to remain in school. Accordingly, inspection has been consolidated and during 2015–2017, 1,505 establishments were supervised, and no elements of forced child labor were observed. National Labor force survey conducted by MLHW was finalized in 2017.

25. A manual on the effects of trafficking prepared by MLHW (2016) and TOT of 72 sub-regional officials and social workers conducted who in turn trained 16,000 community members. Seminars were convened in 8 sub-regions of the high-risk regions (Central, Southern, Anseba, Gash Barka) and strengthened awareness and responsibility to combat child and women trafficking. Partners including national civic organizations and media have consolidated the campaign. The National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) in particular, sensitized 295,000 youth (1,520 facilitators) on the negative impact of illegal migration and human trafficking, and established mini media clubs in middle and senior secondary schools.

26. Eritrea's fight against global human trafficking networks has been a priority. Many direct and indirect beneficiaries of this scourge have been brought to justice and illegal migration has sharply declined in intensity in recent times. The involvement of some countries, organizations, and surrogate anti-Eritrean groups has been evident. The futile aim to precipitate and incite illicit migration of Eritrean youth, children and women, destabilize the nation and make regime change is well documented and Eritrea demanded international accountability on the "hideous crime". Eritrea is active in the Horn of Africa anti-migration and human trafficking efforts and other international initiatives.

(c) Improving the quality of life of the Vulnerable and Persons with Disability (PWDs)

27. The legal rights of PWDs is enshrined in the Transitional Civil code (Articles 340, 1728) and reflected in the labour proclamation No. 118/2001 on employment, Proclamation No.82/2004 on assistance in respect to customs duties. Furthermore, the PFDJ National charter (1994) and the macro level policies augment their fulfilment. A National Policy draft on persons with disabilities was also discussed in a workshop convened on May 2015.

28. Addressing vulnerability is a priority and 35,212 children, 3,747 host and vulnerable families, families with OVCs and women headed households benefited from the monthly financial assistance for improved livelihoods, income generating activities, assistance to continue education for street children, orphans and disabled children and the "donkey for school" project for mobility of disabled children promoted to pursue education. Moreover, the GoSE de-institutionalized orphanages but continues care and protection of 402 orphans in an orphanage centre while 5,885 orphans (53.8% girls) are hosted by 11 non-government organizations.

29. The Martyr's Survivors Benefit Scheme (Proclamation No 137/2003) under the Hidri Trust Fund has continued as a social protection programme for martyr's families and children. An average of ERN 311 million (about USD 20.73 million) is spent every year. It covers monthly allowance for decent life and additionally self-financing activities (grant and credit schemes) is also promoted.

30. The care and support to persons with disabilities (PWDs) is rooted in the culture and morality of the Eritrean society and is an advantage to the success of the institutional and organizational base to support PWDs. Community Based Rehabilitation Programme (CBRP) with 2,766 volunteer members in all sub regions works to reintegrate PWDs into normal life. Moreover, the GoSE provides budgetary support to 4,731 (17.7% females) war disabled veterans (WDVs) to cover monthly living expenses and health service. The Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPWDs) also create job opportunities and self-financing activities to their members and conduct community awareness campaigns. Moreover, the eye glass workshop gives free check-ups and the national orthopaedic workshop provides assorted mobility appliances to PWDs.

31. The driving factors that contribute to improving the wellbeing of PWDs are the favourable government policy, and the constructive role of families and on PWDs and the readiness of PWDs to be self-reliant. Challenges still remain in availing residential houses, orthopaedic appliances, vocational training, funding to update data and situation of PWDs at national level and solving physical environmental barriers.

3. Women equality and empowerment

32. All discriminations are abolished, including that on the basis of sex, by Proclamation 1/1991. Transitional Codes consign equality before the law and prohibit any form of

discrimination based on sex. The PFDJ National Charter (1994) also declares that '*a society that does not respect the rights and equality of women cannot be truly liberated*". The following additional proclamations also guarantee women's equality:

- Citizenship Proclamation No. 21/1992
- Land Tenure Proclamation No. 58/1994
- Labour Proclamation No.118/2001
- National Service Act No.82/1995
- Proclamation No. 58/2007

33. Affirmative action on fair gender representation. As per Article 10(2) of Proclamation No. 86/1996, women's right for 30% seats in the assemblies at all levels and public life is promoted. One of three community magistrates elected by local assemblies and at least one member in the elected land tenure committees at all levels is female. Community development projects are approved when they address women's issues. In consideration of the prevailing reality, slightly lower entry requirement is implemented in higher education and priority is given in employment driven vocational training. Sport Federations also reserve seats for women.

34. Development perspectives on women equality are mainstreamed in national development in accordance to government policies. Moreover, the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW), as reflected in Article 2 of its Constitution (reviewed in its 7th Congress - September 2014), is the national body mandated to promote gender equality.

(a) Awareness raising activities

35. Campaigns have consolidated efforts on women equality – 8,265 seminars, workshops, meetings on social, political, legal rights, traditional harmful practices and communicable diseases were conducted at all levels to reach out 452,729 citizens. Mother and child safety campaigns were conducted (107,113 mothers – 3.64% pregnant) and strengthened sexual reproductive health and prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) understanding and behaviour. Furthermore, about 13275 students and 6,927 women from 3 regions were trained and promoted school-based gender and health training in at least five schools of each region. Every November, NUEW held 16 days of *activism* against Gender Based Violence (GBV). The International Women's Day is used as an occasion to mobilize promotion of women rights.

36. Media campaigns at system level – Radio programmes under the banner of 'Voice of Eritrean women' is broadcasted in Tigrigna, Tigre, Arabic, Saho and Afar, and TV programmes (Norit and Saida) have promoted legal and political rights, health related knowledge and shared successful stories in economic empowerment of women. NUEW Magazine (*Ageizo* – emancipation of women) published every quarter contributed in raising consciousness and responsibility. Furthermore, two documentary films on FGM/C and women empowerment were produced and contributed to the effective mobilization of communities.

37. NUEW created visibility in international space in the sessions of the Commission on Status of Women (CSW), HRC and ACHPR and organized side events on women equality and empowerment. The 4th and 5th CEDAW reports were presented in 2014.

(b) Gender equality and empowerment

38. Women's Role in Public Life – Women hold 28.5% of posts in political and public life and 26% in regional assemblies. In spite of the declared 30% affirmative action, more effort is needed at higher levels, but it is promising at lower levels (35.4% unit heads, 33% in community court judges, 34% local level assemblies and administration, etc.). To consolidate the achievements and implement the Gender Plan of Action, ministries and institutions have established gender focal points and leadership training has been expanded in the last 4 years.

39. Economic and social-cultural support has empowered women – NUEW in its own capacity supported micro credit economic schemes for 5,418 women, and 694 women in five regions have been supported to establish model cooperative agricultural schemes. Financial and material support is given to junior and senior girl students. Awareness of students on gender issues, reproductive health and transmitted diseases has deepened and consolidated through reproductive health committees. 11,275 (95,913 in the last decade) fire wood energy saving stoves are introduced in rural areas.

(c) Discriminatory practices

40. The fight against FGM/C and early Marriage has been strengthened. 548 committees with 3,666 members (64.12% male) are functioning at regional, sub regional and village levels with deeper effect in particular at the grassroots level. They have been empowered to uphold more responsibility in the fight against FGM/C and early child marriage.

41. Grassroots Popular Movements – In the last two years grassroots popular movements have strengthened the fight against FGM/C and early marriage with declarations and plans to ban the practices. Accordingly, the meeting of religious leaders in the Central Region on November 20, 2016 issued a declaration to ban FGM and early marriage. The involvement of religious leaders was also critical in the Anseba Region. Asmat, Habero and Adi Tekelian sub regions have declared an FGM/C Zero subzones. Other regions have also initiated the same approaches.

Level of activity	*No of Committees*	*No of members*	*% of male*
Regions	6	70	82.9
Sub-regional	82	798	73.6
Village/Locality	460	3666	61.7

(d) Protection of women from violence

42. Monitoring through law enforcement agencies, administrations and anti-FGM/C and early marriage committees is highly institutionalized at local levels. In 2016, 39 women in Anseba Region, 2 women in the Gash Bark Region and 4 in Southern Region were convicted for practicing FGM/C. NUEW has established counselling and legal advice centres in all regions.

B. Social sector strategy and dignified life

1. Access to food

43. Food security is a priority in Eritrea's Integrated Social Sector Strategy. In spite of erratic rainfall, raising agricultural productivity has been one of the successful goals in ensuring availability and accessibility of food and the policy to transform agriculture is showing results. Model Irrigation schemes have been stepped up contributing to the overall productivity. As a result, productivity reached an average of 265,000 tons/year cereals (average demand is 300,000 tons/year). During favourable seasons, productivity is high above average demand (example 510,000 tons in 2014). The average productivity of vegetables and fruits is also 535,090 tons/year.

44. *Proactive Government Role* – In the difficult circumstances when rain failed, food market prices soared, and to fill gaps, the Government used its reserves and imported some additional to ensure food availability, accessibility and affordability. The Government Crop and Livestock Corporation promoted food availability and accessibility at affordable prices. The Hidri Programme for subsidized food supplies (some imported in hard currency) also runs 201 centres (in 67 sub regions) and guaranteed availability, accessibility and affordability. The amount is determined by the family size and minimum of 10 essential food necessities is sold at subsidized prices and some at rational prices. Food prices also went down in the last 2 years but more effort is still needed.

45. Monitoring food quality is promoted – The Legal Notice No. 113/2006 is enforced to determine the standards for milk and milk product processing plants and enforcement of the Plant Quarantine Proclamation No 156/2006 has been strengthened. Moreover, the Legal Notice No. 114/2006 has been strictly applied to regulate pesticides.

46. Compulsory vaccination on animals is enforced by the MOA. This is conducted regularly against different kinds of disease such as PPR, FMD, sheep pox, Anthrax, Rabies, ILT, NCD, Gumboro, I. Coryza and Fowl Pox. It is given by the MOA to both extensive and intensive animals.

2. Health

47. Respect of health rights The Transitional Codes in particular dedicate three health specific chapters (one chapter in Civil Code and two chapters in Criminal Code). Four specific proclamations namely, Proclamation No. 36/1993 on Control of drugs, Medical Supplies, Cosmetics and Sanitary Items; Proclamation No.74/1995, on Health Service in Private Sector; Proclamation 143/2004 on Tobacco Control; and Proclamation 58/2007 to ban FGM/C.

48. Health rights are promoted under the National Health Policy of Eritrea (NHP-2010) and the National Health Sector Strategic Development Plan – HSSDP (2012–2016). The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health for all is one of the fundamental rights of every citizen. Eritrea is now implementing the HSSDP-II, which covers the period from 2017 to 2021 and is reviewing its NHP 2010. Various guidelines have been issued to expand and strengthen the respect of health rights in particular by addressing issues of access and quality.

49. Public health The National Health Promotion Division of the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the different stakeholders has worked to influence knowledge and behaviour of the public through various and diverse interventions and campaigns. Health campaigns (listed in the annex) have also contributed in addressing health rights and services.

(a) Accessibility and quality of health services strengthened

50. Equitable health provision has been expanded and the demographic distribution is such that 60% in rural areas have free access to health service in less than 5% km and about 80% in less than 10 km. Antenatal coverage is 97%, delivery at health facility and by skilled birth attendance reached 62% (was 6% at independence in 1991), virtually universal immunization (98%), polio free status, maternal and neonatal tetanus is no more a public concern for under-5 children. TB incidence is also the lowest in the Horn of Africa and East Africa at about 70 per 100,000.

51. Trends in both HIV and AIDS cases are favourable, suggesting stabilization at a low prevalence level and reversal of HIV infection in the general population, with a current prevalence of around 0.5%. HIV infected persons are supported by the Government with the support and contribution of non-government actors. The establishment of the HIV/AIDs Persons Association (named Biddho – meaning Challenge) contributes to avoiding stigmatization and marginalization of victims. The NUEYS Eritrean Social Marketing Group also promotes awareness programs, support schemes and condom distribution to assist HIV/AIDS prevention efforts.

52. The Roll Back Malaria Strategy was launched in July 1999, and since then, the overall malaria morbidity has decreased by 90%, while the overall mortality has decreased by 86%. In this regard, Eritrea's exemplary achievement has got recognition of the AU and on January 30, 2016, Eritrea received the Alma Award for Excellence in the Fight against Malaria. Currently, Eritrea is working towards pre-elimination phase in malaria control.

53. Diarrheal disease is one of the three leading causes of mortality among under-5 year children, and of morbidity among the general population. Rural Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) is thus a priority to make rural villages "Open Defecation Free (ODF)". As of June 2018, more than 1,000 villages were triggered and 700 villages (more than a quarter of the rural villages) declared ODF.

54. Outreach programmes are maximized in public health. In all regions the 43 functional waiting homes have improved access for pregnant mothers. 2,725 pregnant women safely delivered in health facilities after staying in the waiting homes and only 61 were referred to higher level facilities. Properly trained and adequately supplied Community Health Agents (CHA) have delivered various promotional and clinical health services, conduct test febrile cases and treat the confirmed malaria cases and treated 33,395 malaria patients (40% of total). IMNCI, IMNCI, TB dots Promoters, Reproductive health agents, Nutrition and WASH promoters are some of the areas in which CHAs provide health services to people in their homes.

55. Non-communicable diseases have now moved to become among the 10 leading causes of morbidity and mortality and heart diseases, injuries, hypertensive diseases, diabetes have been targeted. Incidence of blindness is also fairly low but preventive hygiene and sanitation campaigns are administered. Effort to prevent cataract blindness has succeeded. Efforts are underway to control non-communicable diseases by tackling the risk factors, which include alcohol consumption and physical inactivity, amongst others. Efforts are also underway to establish specialized centres, which include New Cardiac, Physiotherapy Centre, Oxygen Plants, Radiotherapy Centre, etc.

56. Availability and affordability of essential drugs has been raised by locally producing more than 48 products covering 7 therapeutic ranges and preparation has been made to increase this in the near future. Medicines are sold at subsidized and sometimes at affordable prices and are accessible over the counter and on the basis of medical authorization for prescription medicines. Quality of imported drugs is also monitored.

57. The efforts and achievements in health influenced through all-round, inter-sector development endeavours has resulted in continuous improvements of health indicators such as under-five mortality, maternal mortality and life expectancy. Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 LB was reduced by 69% from 1,590 in 1991 to 501 in 2015. Neonatal Mortality Rate, per 1,000 LB was reduced by 46% from 33 in 1991 to 17.7 in 2016. Under-five Mortality Rate, per 1,000 LB was reduced by 70.5% from 151 in 1991 to 44.5 in 2016. Life expectancy at birth was increased from 48 years in 1990 to 65 years in 2016 (62.9 in male and 67.1 in female).

(b) Develop HR capacity

58. Health training institutions and centres have expanded and strengthened and have boosted human capacity. Despite regular production and recruitment of new health workers, staffing norms are not yet met, especially for specialists at hospital level, including surgeons, radiologists, internists, etc. Nevertheless, more than 800 students graduated (2014–2018) in various health fields from various health institutions. These include 324 associate nurses from the three schools of associate nurses (Barentu, Ghindae and Mendefera); 150 Diploma in Comprehensive Nursing and Midwifery from Asmara College of Health Sciences (ACHS); 45 with Diploma Nurse upgraded to Degree Nurse (BSN) from (ACHS); 46 at MSC level in various health fields from ACHS and various overseas universities (Dundee University, ROMA university, London University, University of Gezira); about 120 doctors from Orotta School of Medicine and Dental Science in the Eritrea.

3. Education rights

59. The provision of broad-based education incorporating widespread dissemination of skills and languages and extensive human capital formation is guided by the macro level Government policies and strategies. In accordance to the reviewed 2012 National Education Policy, the Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP 2013-2017) was implemented and expanded equitable access and quality as well as institutional capacity building. Further policies and strategies for the provision of equitable access with focus on disadvantaged groups, rural and periphery areas are promoted. They include Inclusive Education, Girls' Education, Nomadic Education, Complementary Elementary Education CEE), Adult Education and Continuity and ban on corporal punishment in schools. All policies promote access and equity, and accordingly, the MOE has started to implement the ESDP 2018-2021.

(a) Access, quality and Universalization of Primary Education Improved

60. Early Childhood Development Programme has promoted early intervention – Pre-primary schools increased by 8.5% and enrolment increased by 6.6% (female increase 6.4%). Student number reached 47,196 participants and 48.7% are girls. Rural coverage rose from 64.2 to 65% increasing by 18.5% and the Rural Community Care Givers Scheme played a critical role. Promoting pre-primary in established primary schools has also been considered as a way of maximizing the utilization of opportunities and resources. In general, the progress is significant but much more remains to be done.

61. Mother tongue education drives universalization of primary education – The overriding policy is provision of basic education up to middle level education. The provision reflects the Language Policy sanctioned by law and reflects the equality of Eritrean languages. Primary education presently enrols 349,753 students (45.1% girls) and female NER rose from 79.1% to 80.4%. Rural schools increased by 1.3% and are 80.7% of total at primary level. Continuity to middle is given focus (rural middle schools constitute 72%). Better opportunities and continuity, in particular for girls, has been created by establishing 10 boarding schools (9,852 students; 34.6% girls). 165 schools (some with boarding facilities) serve nomadic communities and enrol 7,528, (46% girls). The national workshop on nomadic education (December 2011) has helped to assess and redefine the strategic plan.

62. Complementary Elementary Education (CEE) introduced – in consideration of the challenge that 17% of primary school age children are out of school (was 33.7% during 2nd UPR) and that girl's participation in some remote areas requires more attention, universalization of primary education is supplemented by CEE. In 2016/17 academic year (as a sample), 8,575 students (46.4% girls) out-of-school children aged 9-14, particularly from remote and rural areas benefitted. It is provided in 9 languages and 85% (39.8% girls) continued to the middle level.

63. Special needs education is promoted by two non-government schools for the deaf (in two towns) and one for the blind (by the government). Enrolment increased by 11% (50% girls). The provision of special needs education is also mainstreamed in to 45 regular middle schools. Furthermore, children with intellectual and development problems get educational opportunities in pilot mainstream schools.

64. Gender Parity in Education (GPI) is encouraging. GPI at the pre- primary level is 0.94 (1 is the equal participation coefficient). Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) at elementary, middle and secondary levels is 0.82, 0.85 and 0.91 respectively. This is one of the challenges in education, and MOE is cognizant of the additional efforts needed. It however, reflects the effort and progress made to ensure the right of girls to education and guarantee continuity to higher levels.

65. Literacy and Adult education programme constitutes an important national programme and illiteracy rate has dropped to 20%. A national workshop of all stakeholders in 2016 assessed the progress as promising. During 2016 – 17,40,203 adults and out of school children (89% female) participated in Adult Literacy Program with 75.7% (67.6% female) completion rate. Evening programme up to secondary level caters 6,034 adults (36% females) for those who miss educational opportunity. The social return of the education scheme is reflected by the achievement of 74 females from remote areas who completed secondary level education and secured social mobility and career development by being employed in various public and private establishments. Some others joined technical schools and the Warsay Yikealo Secondary School in order to participate in the Secondary School Leaving Examination.

66. Secondary level education enrolment reached 81,851 students (47% girls) in the 2017-18 academic year. The 12th grade education for all high school students continues at the Warsay Yekealo Secondary School (within the premise of Sawa Education and Training Centre) for the following cogent reasons:

- maximize opportunity to university entrance
- aggregate all students in one high school for their last secondary school year and create a level playing field that ensures higher meritorious competition

- consolidate harmony and social cohesion of the new generation.

67. The following tracks of continuing further education are ensured in accordance to the National Secondary School Leaving Examination results with no one left behind:

- those who score passing marks join the higher learning institutions at degree/diploma levels
- those who fail to achieve passing marks take middle level technical skills at the NACVOT
- The rest who fail to score the necessary mark are given opportunity to acquire a one-year vocational skills in the recently established vocational centres around some of the transformational development projects.

68. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is provided in 8 technical schools at the intermediate level (for 2 years after completing grade 10 of secondary education). The number of schools has increased from 4 in 1999 to 8 in 2016 with enrolment increase from 908 in 1999 to 3,613 by 2016. The schools graduate about 700-800 students annually. The National Centre for Vocational Training (NACVOT) yearly graduates an average of 2,055 students (52% female) in agriculture technology, advanced construction and building technology, commerce and business management) for two years, after secondary education.

69. Equal rights and opportunities to free higher education institutions are guaranteed in 7 higher learning institutions distributed throughout the nation. About 31,786 students were granted educational opportunities in the last three academic years at masters, bachelor, diploma and certificate levels with yearly enrolment increases of 4.95% and 5.47%. The bachelor and diploma enrolments amount to 62.6% and 36.52% respectively. The average yearly female representation is 42.4% but in 2017/2018 academic year reached 50.4% in Marine Science and Technology and 50.5% in Agriculture (moreover, in science and technology 41.6%, Business and Economics 44.3%, Arts and Social Science 43.4% and Health Science 44.5%). In general, during the same period 5267 (48.7% studied in the Institute of Technology.

70. Quality of education has improved in particular at the elementary and middle levels but there is still a long way to go. The effort has been to strengthen the relevance of education and promote student-centred teaching-learning process, ensure efficiency and effectiveness, transform the role of teachers and improve educational management. Learner achievement levels and attainment targets are assessed, and the transformation of the monitoring system is taken as a priority. Despite improvements, wastage at all levels is still a challenge. More significant measures are planned for the next 5 years on zero wastage policy.

(b) Allocation of resources to education and the education of girls in particular

71. Education is free at all levels. Spending on education was 10.49% in 2013, 12.33% in 2014, 10.05% in 2015 and 10.06% in 2016 of total Government expenditure and is 4% of GDP. About 31.01% of total expenditure is on primary and middle level and shows the Government's commitment to compulsory, free basic education. Community contribution is considerable and mostly in kind and labour - example: construction of classrooms, provision of school items, school uniforms, payment for utilities and other similar costs. External funding is very small portion of education financing. The African Development Bank, UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) were the main partners in the ESDP (2013–2017). The African Development Bank supported TEVT and UNICEF and GPE on basic education.

C. Administration of justice

1. Implementation of National Laws

72. The main source of law still in force is the transitional codes (Civil Code, Civil Procedure Code, Penal Code, Criminal Procedure, Commercial Code and Maritime Code).

Moreover, 178 proclamations and 125 legal notices were also enacted and implemented. In spite of challenges in institution capacity building, the commitment to strengthen the State and the rule of law through viable administration of justice is thus apparent. Pursuant to Articles 2(4) (5) of the Legal Notice 14/1993, the Ministry of Justice established a Law Reform Committee and reviewed the transitional codes and the new National Codes were published in 2015. Among the attributes of the new National Codes are the following:

- human rights centred;
- take into account Eritrea's rich traditions and cultural mores rooted in encoded, centuries-old Customary Laws based on peaceful settlement of disputes;
- address the civil and political rights aiming to enhance access to better delivery of justice;
- include new types of crimes linked to the advancement in technology.

73. The MOJ is conducting campaigns aimed at raising awareness on rights and duties guaranteed by law in particular on the new National Codes.

2. Fulfilment of legal rights

74. Independence of the Prosecution. The public prosecution office, headed by the Attorney General, functions throughout the nation. Continued effort is made to maintain the integrity of these institutions in accordance to Proclamation No.11/1991 and Article 7 of Proclamation 37/93. Hence, it functions to uphold the supremacy of the law and protect human rights. It also provides judicial and administrative remedies in case of any violation. To achieve this aim, human resource development and institution building at all levels has been promoted as a priority.

75. Continuous effort is also made to strengthen the Judiciary. The Ministry of Justice exerts extensive efforts to secure access to Justice and promote equality and fairness, ensure timely case processing, maintain institutional integrity and uplift public confidence in the performances of the justice system: but more effort is still needed. Equality before the law is guaranteed and no discrimination is made based on race, colour, religion or sex of persons in the Eritrean justice system. Thus, relentless efforts are exerted to uphold the rule of law and treat persons in similar circumstance fairly. Moreover, courts proceedings are open to the public and maintain transparency and accountability.

76. The Eritrean Judiciary is composed of hierarchical courts namely: the Community Court, Regional Court, and High Court as well as the Final Appellate Division within the High Court have ensured access to justice. A critical challenge is that there is no fully-fledged system of public defence that runs in public-private partnership. Defendants who are indigent, deaf and dump, juvenile and those charged with offenses punishable with rigorous imprisonment exceeding ten years have access to public defence. Accordingly, the Court continues to assign public defence from its personnel to represent individuals eligible for defence in High Courts.

77. Equitable access and coverage is promoted through the 430 community courts established nation-wide under Proclamation 132/2003, the jurisdiction of which was consolidated by Proclamation No 167/2012. The judges are elected by the respective communities they serve. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for co-ordination, budget and training which include basic literacy, file keeping and basic legal training.

3. Law enforcement and practice

78. Law enforcement is consolidated in accordance to the Criminal Procedure Code. Standard police guidelines and code of conduct are applied. The Eritrean Forces of Police and Security (EFPS) launched its Strategic Plan 2011-2017 based on national assessment of crime situation and performance. Accordingly, EFPS has maintained peace, prevented crimes, commissioned offenses, apprehended offenders and assisted prosecutors in investigation and prosecution. In spite of capacity challenges, public order and safety is strong. The Strategic Plan (2018–2022) is initiated under the motto of "Strengthening a nation in sustainable peace and rule of law."

79. Demographic distribution of policing is ensured through police centres operational in 54 sub regions of the country and 31 additional centres are functional in consideration of social and geographic factors. There are special standby units in the HQ ready for any emergency missions. 19.95% of the police personnel are females working at various capacities. Legal and institutional basis is upheld to ensure credibility, integrity and transparency and investigation reports are forwarded regularly and directly to prosecutors. Accordingly, the following measures prevail:

- police stations write instant report to their higher officers on any measure and operation
- anyone detained or appearing for questioning is given orientation to forward claims of abuses, if any, which, after being registered in the daily Police Diary, is forwarded to the Legal Service and Inspection Branch and assessed
- Police Officers Comprehensive Guideline for legal and tactful crime investigation is applied in conformity to Articles 22-27 of the TCPCE and use of torture is monitored and avoided
- The EFPS Legal Service and Inspection Branch routinely follows adherence to established legal provisions and each case is assessed in weekly meetings
- disciplinary misconducts are handled within the hierarchy of the EFPS, but violations amounting to crime are forwarded to the public prosecution
- Prosecutors and judges visit police stations, detention centres and enforce adherence to law.

80. Community police elected by local assemblies are provided with basic training and augment police activities. With the current capacity of 10,725 throughout the country, it has provided encouraging results in the promotion of public order and safety. They deal with petty offences and mostly are settled by Community Courts but others are referred to police stations. This has ensured community responsibility in maintaining public order and safety. Though it is a new experience that requires further consolidation, it has so far proven effective in the aims set.

81. Respect for human dignity is highly considered in the culture of the Eritrean society and reflected in the intolerance to violations and abuses and remains a priority of policing. Police behaviour and discipline is upheld and monitored through the rules and procedures and code of conduct. They have deterred any abuse and inappropriate practice or behaviour. The Eritrean Police Force (EPF) takes appropriate measures on any abuse and violation of responsibility during active service, though the occurrence is minimal. During the reporting period, 12 police officers were prosecuted for breach of trust, theft, bribe and misuse of responsibility.

82. Police/community relationship is an asset. Law enforcement and public safety is maintained successfully with the full support of communities and citizens. It is strengthened through periodic meetings, seminars, consultations and public awareness and responsibility on law and order is high. The overall effort is augmented through public media and EFPS regular magazine. An average of 1,502 meetings and seminars (yearly participants of 551,868) takes place at all levels (national, regional, local levels). It is also organized along social backgrounds (students, communities at village/urban locality level, industry workers, transport employees, professionals and businesses, national associations, government employees, etc.). Similar but separate seminars and meetings are organized on road traffic and public safety.

83. *Crime is very minimal in Eritrea*. About 26,610 offenses have been made during 2017–2018 (mid) with yearly decline rates of 3%, 74%, 11.12% in 2015, 2016, 2017, and the 8% decline target by 2018 has been surpassed (Refer table below). Generally, crime has declined by an average of 13.78% in the last 4 years. 80% of the offenses have been settled within the established 28 days legal requirement indicating expedient investigation process. Eritrea is a nation with low crime level and the type in comparison to many countries is also negligible. About 75% are petty offenses related to theft, robbery, and burglary. A study by an expert in EFPS (presented in the International Eritrean Studies Conference – 2016)

based on the data of recorded crimes of 24 years reflects this truth and indicates that violent crime rate in Eritrea is very low and not interlinked with corruption.

	2014	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Number of offences	6465	6271	5807	5161	2906
Yearly % decline	-	-3%	-7.4%	-11.12%	

84. EFPS has worked to strengthen institutional capacity and regular training and upgrading is conducted. 2017 Report indicates that 243 police officers have been trained in various areas. In 2018, 17 police officers participated in various conferences and meetings including on counterterrorism, intelligence gathering techniques, and human rights guide line for police officers, forensic science, assessment of crimes, nuclear crime, tackling human trafficking and transnational crimes such as operation USALAMA. International cooperation to prevent transnational crimes with INTERPOL has expanded and is effective. EFPS submitted a cooperation proposal (February 2017) to UNODC focusing on Crime Prevention, Crime Investigation and Human Resources Development. Accordingly, two training workshops have been given to 46 officers in Asmara by UNODC experts (4–8 June and 6–9 August 2018.

D. Liberties

1. Improve the penitentiary system and situation

85. Respect and Protection of detainee rights remains the main goal of the Eritrea Correctional and Rehabilitation Services (ECRS) in the 11 detention facilities (one in the capital city for females). Their dignity, security and development are guaranteed in accordance to the Transitional National codes. Inmates are given orientation on the Prisons Services Regulation on their rights and duties and to report any abuses by Prison police (PP) officers (20% are female). Those who violate the regulation are accounted by law.

86. ECRS rehabilitates convicted citizens to become law-abiding and productive citizens. It runs a network of clinics, HIV/AIDS counselling sections, academic and vocational programmes, and sport, culture, and awareness raising activities. The quarterly magazine of the ECRS also serves as a source for information and discussion among inmates and the general public. The growth in the facilities and services indicates the prioritization of detainee human security and development. Monthly visits by parents and friends, and additional visits upon request, and letter correspondences at any time are part of the detainee rights implemented judiciously.

87. Health facilities equipped with basic laboratories are operational in most prison centres. The National Referral Hospital in the Capital City also has a designated in-patient section for prisoners. Routine medical services from nearby dental and eye hospitals are, conducted and continuous sensitization and advocacy on HIV/AIDS and TB is given. The health security of inmates is guaranteed.

88. The national education policy is implemented and 8 prisons have academic programmes up to secondary level (the remaining only up to grade 4 due to limitation of capabilities). Presently, there are 1012 students at primary, 408 at middle and 348 at secondary levels. Inmates participate in the national university entrance examinations. In the 2015/2016 academic year, 25 participated in the National Secondary School Leaving Exam and joined higher education at various levels. 1050 inmates successfully completed vocational training in various trades.

89. *Legal right to unrestricted religious belief and practice in detention centres is implemented* in accordance to Article 2 (2–9) of the ECRS. They continue to pray, fast and observe other practices in their respective religions and beliefs. In most Centres, this is freely done in their dorms, but the Sembel Centre, in the capital city, has a Chapel and a Mosque.

90. Access to information on national and international affairs is guaranteed and all centres ensure access to radio, Satellite TV and print media. Various cultural and sport

activities and competitions take place within and between prison centres with the participation of family members and the public. All prison facilities have cultural troupes and are active during national holidays, religious festivities and on special occasions. 190 seminars covering national development, new national codes, value of work, illegal migration, stress management, reading skills, socialization and peer pressure, etc. have been organized by professionals. General knowledge annual competition between inmates from different prisons is also organized.

2. Freedom of religion

91. Eritrea is a secular state. Freedom of religion is however, protected by law and is sustained as a culture respected by every citizen. The Transitional Codes protect the rights of individuals to be free from any discrimination and persecution on account of their religion. No citizen is imprisoned on account of beliefs, including religious beliefs. Eritrea's rich history of religious tolerance, co-existence and harmony in a turbulent region that is often wracked by acute religious polarization and strife is thus an example.

92. Religious institutions conduct elections for their respective hierarchies – the Synod, Dar-al-Iftae, and other decision making organs without any intervention from any side. They all have establishments for religious education up to higher levels. Even within the confines of secularism, the Government of Eritrea has shouldered the obligation to ensure that the centuries-old religious tolerance and harmony is not perturbed by externally induced new trends of Islamic or Christian fundamentalism that corrode the social fabric. Religious affairs, including registration, declaration of funding etc. are regulated by Proclamation 73/1995. Failure to comply with the requirements entails legal responsibility.

93. Religious institutions and leaders continue to play a significant role in strengthening the harmony and the social cohesion of the society. The interfaith joint coordination mechanism of religious leaders is a great asset. They work jointly to address social problems without discrimination, celebrate the main religious holidays in joint inter-faith festivities at regional and national level, promote projects to assist vulnerable communities and groups, and support Martyr's families, advocacy and campaigns against HIV/AIDS, FGM/C and early marriage, etc.

3. Freedom of expression, association, assembly

94. A fundamental principle in the transitional codes and proclamations is respect and protection of citizens' right to lawful expression and opinion without interference. This demands collective responsibility to the nation and hence protection of national security, national values, public order and respect to others.

(a) Media

95. The contribution of Eritrea's media establishment to freedom of expression is ascertained by its *participatory approach*. Public Media cater for a wider public participation and consolidate the responsible participation in national development. Accordingly, radio programmes in all Eritrean languages, TV programmes and local newspapers in four languages (Tigrigna, Tigre, Arabic and English) fulfil this purpose. The panel discussions and platforms, including the call programmes, encourage citizens to express their critical views on policies, national issues and related rights. Individuals influential in imparting knowledge are invited to media panel discussions. Awareness raising and knowledge on Eritrea's mainstreaming of human rights and participation in the UPR process and other international obligations have been presented in the media (TV, radio and newspaper). A seminar for journalists, media experts and staff of the Ministry of Information was organized by the UPR Coordinating Body in 2015.

96. Various ministries and national civic organizations have slots in public media (radio, TV, print media). Magazines with specific purposes and target audience are published by various ministries, agencies and national civic organizations. Production and distribution of various cultural works is also growing and contributing to freedom of expression.

(b) Use of communication media and access to information

97. Satellite communication has set a new realm in access to information. There is exponential growth in TV satellite dishes that have sprouted including in most of the remote rural areas. With standard decoders that most families own, households have access to more than 600 foreign satellite TV and radio channels broadcast 24 hours/day without any restriction.

98. Internet service started in a small and limited capacity in the year 2000 but the annual increment is substantial. The broadband width remains slow because Eritrea could not join the sea-based Fiber Optic Cable connection when it was launched 12 years ago for financial reasons at the time. But the Government has been negotiating with overseas companies and broadband internet access will be secured in the near future. The prevailing low bandwidth and speed notwithstanding, there are no restrictions on internet access and internet cafés are preponderant everywhere. They provide service to the public with proper considerations of the national laws and have become useful medium for information access and exchange.

(c) Freedom of association and assembly

99. While the above efforts have contributed to strengthen the culture of free expression, seminars and discussions organized from the village up to the national levels for different purposes consolidate critical thinking and responsible participation. The president, ministers, all levels of administrators, national associations and interest groups organize forums, debates and discussions, including through conferences and workshops. International Conferences are also organized to promote research development and to integrate Eritrea's capabilities and contributions into the international intellectual culture.

100. Freedom of association and assembly is respected by law, and the Legal Notice No 5 of 1992 on "Registration of non-government national organizations and associations" promotes their establishment. The system of 31 civic national level organizations (encompassing social groups of women, youth and workers, professional interest groups, organizations for persons with disabilities (OPWDs)), 190 trade unions and hundreds of community social associations have been active in their respective areas of mandates. The system accommodates more than 755,000 members and embodies the dynamic growth of civic organization. NUEYS, NUEW, and NCEW encompass 587,559 members while OPWDs have more than 25,935 members.

101. All associations are registered autonomous bodies and have their own constitutions, elected leaders and conduct congresses, conferences, meetings and activities.

- *NUEYS as an organization of students and youth (*age 14-40) has membership up to the village level. It extends to a network of schools and higher learning institutions and has 237,000 members. The female representation in all levels of the leadership is 42%.
- *NUEW* has 163 Branches, 481 sub-branches and 4343 basic groups. Membership is open to all Eritrean women above the age of 16 and has more than 329,314 members (average yearly increase is 7%).
- *The National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW)* has 21,245 members (40.4% female). In 2015, the 5 NCEW federations (food and drinks, chemical and mining, service sectors, transportation and communication, textile and leather) conducted congresses.
- The *OPWDs*, namely, the National Patriotic Association of the Disabled Persons (18,000 members), the Eritrean Association of the Blind (3,000 members), the Eritrean Association of the Deaf (4,000 members – 40% female) and the National Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disability (935 members) are active in the follow-up of the UPR recommendations and mainstream human rights and promote various activities.

E. Engagement and international cooperation

1. UPR and monitoring

102. The UPR National Coordinating Body (NCB), composed of various stakeholders (MOFA, MOJ, MND, MOE, MOE, MLHW, MOA, NFPS, NUEW, NEYS, and NCEW) monitored the follow up of the accepted recommendations. This is based on the UPR Eritrea Framework for Action (2015–2018). The understanding on human rights mainstreaming is consolidated, institutional and organizational basis expanded and coordination strengthened. A UPR mid-term Review Report was disseminated on May 18, 2017 and helped to assess progress, highlight experience and challenges and fast track implementation.

2. Conventions

(a) Accession and ratification

103. Eritrea acceded to the Conventions against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (on 25 September 2014) and Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children on 24 Sep. 2014.

(b) Reflecting International Covenants in the National Laws

104. The transitional as well as the new Penal and Civil Codes incorporate significant parts of international human rights instruments. Many parts of the rights in international human rights instruments are also reflected in the new National Codes. In particular, the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights are well reflected. A document to reflect the provisions of international human rights treaties has been drafted by the MOJ.

3. Engagement with HRC and OHCHR

105. Engagement and cooperation with OHCHR has developed and OHCHR conducted four technical missions to Eritrea. This is based on the three capacity building priorities initiated by Eritrea (on administration of justice, water security and persons with disabilities) and agreed by the OHCHR. During the last OHCHR technical mission, a successful training on the administration of justice was conducted. A proposal for follow up has been submitted by the OHCHR. Invitation was also sent to thematic mandates and Treaty Bodies. Eritrea attended three OHCHR capacity building training on Treaty Body and UPR Reporting mechanisms.

106. Discussion and dialogue were conducted with the UN Country Team, the EU Delegation and the diplomatic core in Eritrea on UPR and mainstreaming of human rights. Cooperation agreements on UPR implementation were developed with the UN and EU. Dialogues on migration and human rights were conducted in Asmara with the Germany, Sweden, Swiss and Norway. Dialogue (15 March 2017) was conducted in Geneva with the UNHCR on the eligibility guidelines on "political asylum" cases of Eritreans in an effort to rectify the damage created through these politically based and unwarranted guidelines. Eritrea became a member of IOM at the 106th Session of the Council.

107. Eritrea contributes to the HRC regular sessions and engages with the President of the Council, High Commissioner, Division for Special Procedures and the UPR Secretariat. Seven side events on various issues were conducted in Geneva and New York and have contributed significantly to strengthen Eritrea's engagement and create a better understanding on Eritrea's development and human rights situation in the country.

108. In spite of the above developments, Eritrea has been subjected to the politically motivated HRC resolutions and mechanisms under the pretext of human rights. These resolutions and mechanisms undermine promotion of genuine human rights and regional peace, security and development and violate the non-selectivity, objectivity and impartiality principles of the Council. Furthermore, the mandate holders indulged into activist

approaches against Eritrea in contravention to the Mandate Holders' Code of Conduct and the UN.

4. Reporting obligations

109. Frameworks for Action to prepare the 6th CEDAW Report and for the preparation of the 5th and 6th CRC National Reports are prepared, and collection of data is taking place. Eritrea submitted the Initial and Combined National Report (1999–2017) to Africa Charter for Human and People's Rights, which were discussed during the 62nd ACHPR Session, and Report on the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in Eritrea, which was discussed in Banjul. Initial report on the Optional Protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography was submitted as annex to the 4th CRC country report.

II. Partial implementation of accepted recommendations

110. There are 12 recommendations in this category. The three areas on Constitution are promotion of human rights in the constitution – 122.31, implementation of the constitution – 122.32, 122.41 and capacity building – 122.42. The 1998 - 2000 costly war with Ethiopia as well as dire conditions of perennial belligerency that ensued in its aftermath have influenced the tempo and pace of the political process of nation building in Eritrea. Nevertheless, the Government declared the writing of a new Constitution in May 2015 and is in process. National Codes have been published and distributed to the public but have not been enacted, as the campaign to popularize them is still going on. Recommendations 122.23 and 122.28 on ILO convention No 182, Assessment on the Ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, have been made but further discussion will be made in the future.

111. Nine recommendations on accession to all human rights instruments (122.2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 14) can be taken as partially implemented as Eritrea is party to 108 International Conventions and Instruments. Eritrea is also committed to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) (acceded on January 14, 1999) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (22 December 1999) and 16 other regional conventions. In the last four years it acceded to the Conventions against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment on 25 September 2014 and Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children on 24 Sep. 2014. The accession to the remaining instruments should be seen in relation to the development in the political process of nation building and the institutional and organisational capacity and reality of institutions.

III. Conclusion – The drive towards a qualitative leap

112. The post-independence period until 1998, characterized by rapid socio-economic, political and social transformation was, however, disrupted by the border war with Ethiopia. The development trajectory, its development continued to be influenced by the continued hostile policy of the previous Ethiopian government, unjust UNSC sanctions and hostilities under the pretext of human rights. These are part of the continued threats and have direct bearing to the promotion of Human Rights. Nevertheless, the people, the Government and the economy have remained resilient and political, economic, social and cultural development have been registered. Eritrea has now embarked on a new development drive!

113. A new strategic development plan has been launched focusing on three important pillars to achieve qualitative leap in the next few years. It focuses on macro-economic stability, comprehensive reorganization of government institutions and consolidation of the political process of nation building. Accordingly, a development structure that features four development zones is declared and effort has been initiated to maximize the utilization of

comparative advantages of each development zone. The new prospects of peace and cooperation between Eritrea and Ethiopia and other countries in the Horn of Africa has created opportunities for cooperation and development and will continue as a strategic priority of the State of Eritrea.

114. In the above context, the Government will continue to strengthen the decisiveness of the people, in particular the youth, to ensure transformations that lead to change. In the political process of nation building, strengthening the administration of justice through the implementation of the new national codes and institutional capacity building, and strengthening institutions and functions of governance will be major aspects.